



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

BELLINGHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION



ESTABLISHED 1973

PUBLISHER OF THE CRIMPVILLE COMMENTS

EXPANDING SERVICES & ACCESS

Leadership

At the May meeting of the Commission, the Commission members voted in officers. Rick Marcoux was voted Chair, Steve Joanis, Vice-Chair and Bernadette Rivard, Secretary. Other members in 2024 were Marjorie Turner Hollman, Lauren Hummel, Jeffrey Prescott, Jennifer Russo and Franco Tocchi.

2024 Accomplishments



Published 2 editions of the Crimpville Comments!

The Spring issue covered Bellingham's Early Settlers & Founding Families, Genealogy Resources, Celebrating Life Long Resident George Whiting's 100th Birthday, and In Memoriam of Bellingham residents who passed away in 2021 and 2022.

The Fall issue covered the History of Transportation in Bellingham, the awarding of the Boston Post Cane to George Whiting, the transfer of the World War I Honor Roll from the Historical Commission to the Bellingham Memorial School, and In Memoriam of Bellingham residents who passed away in 2023.

At right George Whiting with the Boston Post Cane, joined by (right to left Historical Commission members Jeff Prescott, Bernadette Rivard and Rick Marcoux.

Senior Center Newsletter Feature "Historical Bellingham" - each month the Historical Commission submits an article to the Bellingham Senior Center's "Spirit of Bellingham" newsletter.

Facility Upgrades

In 2024 a new security and fire alarm system was installed in the building to protect the museum and its collections. We also upgraded the decades old fluorescent light fixtures in the basement with new, fixtures and LED bulbs. In addition, we purchased new computer equipment, including a large format scanner to assist in scanning larger documents.

Museum Projects and Services

- Bellingham resident and Framingham State University student Molly Garten did a summer internship at the museum. She assisted in organizing collections and made a table of contents for the museum's family history binders that is now on the museum website.
- Partnered with the library and Memorial & Veterans Day Committee on profiles of the fallen that were displayed on the StoryWalk on the Town Common in May and November.
- Assisted researchers with a variety of searches for information on properties, businesses and more

Hours & Visitors

The Museum is regularly staffed by town Senior Tax Work Off Staff. **In this service year, those staff worked over 400 hours at the museum.** Commission has announced regular open hours for the museum for the foreseeable future: Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. We are always available to schedule appointments for visitors outside of our scheduled open hours. **In 2024 nearly 200 people visited the museum.**

Planning and Organizing for the Future

In 2024 we continued planning and organizing for the future. In addition to the continuing work of organizing the basement (which our Senior Tax Work off staff member John Murphery made great strides), other Senior Tax Work Off staff, Marjorie Turner Hollman and Rose Boucher, along with Commission Member Lauren Hummel, continue to work on organizing documents and photographs and updating our inventory. We continue to expand our online presence. Board meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the Historical Commission's page on the town website. We have an electronic newsletter where we share periodic Commission news to our over 200 subscribers and our Facebook page has nearly 800 followers, 100 more than last year. The page averages 5000 views per month. As we complete more of the basement organization, we are hopeful that we will be able to swap out displays to highlight new documents and ephemera of Bellingham History.

2024 Events

Getting Started With Genealogy -In February the Commission partnered with the Bellingham Public Library that was attended by 15 people. Out of that event came great interest that led the library to start a Genealogy Club in early 2025. It meets on the last Monday of the month from 6-7:30 pm.

History for Homeschoolers - In the spring the library held a program for homeschooling families called "History for Homeschoolers". That program included 2 visits to the museum by homeschooling families.

St. Blaise Vendor Fair - In September Commission members participated in the St. Blaise Vendor Fair. We spread the word about the museum and its programs and services, and sold books and other small items that were not Bellingham historical items or were duplicates of items in our collections.

Boston Post Cane - In December the Historical Commission awarded the Boston Post Cane to Bellingham's oldest resident, 100 year old, life-long Bellingham resident George Whiting.

World War I Memorial - Also in December the Historical Commission handed over possession of the town's World War I Memorial to the Bellingham Memorial School (BMS). The large memorial, which we had no place to display, is now proudly displayed at the entrance to BMS.

At right Commission Members Jennifer Russo, Bernadette Rivard and Rick Marcoux (in black shirts) formally hand over the World War I Memorial to BMS Principal Dave Cutler (in white jacket). On the far right is Jim Hastings, Chair of the Bellingham Veteran's & Memorial Day Committee.



Coming in 2025

- Digitization of the Crimpville Comments - Courtesy of the Boston Public Library, the Crimpville Comments are joining our collection of Annual Reports, Yearbooks and other Bellingham Historical Documents

Updated museum hours are on the website and Facebook page

Website: <https://www.bellinghamma.org/historical-commission>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BellinghamHistoricalCommissionMA>

Email: history@bellinghamma.org